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# MAN AND NATURE.

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# POEMS.

# MAN AND NATURE:

## POEMS

## WRITTEN LONG AGO.

Nec fonte labra prolui caballino,
Nec in bicipiti somniasse Parnasso
Memini, nt repente sic poeta prodirem,
Heliconidasque pallidamque Pyrenen
Illis remitto quorum imagines lambunt
Hederae sequaces : ipse semipaganus
Ad sacra vatum carmen offero nostrum.—*Persius.*

LIVERPOOL
PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION,
1883.

Poesy was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things.

BACON.

PR
4515
C35m

This Volume is

Mournfully Inscribed

to the memory of

WILLIAM DAWBARN, Esq.,

of

ELMSWOOD HALL, AIGBURTH,

by his friend

Thomas Craddock.

705568

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## ELMSWOOD.

MAY 26TH, 1881

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### I.

Farewell, dear friend of many years, farewell!
All thou hast been and done in memory now
As mummies lie; and often will she tell,
When round the table friends more friendly grow,
Of thy warm grasp;—that acted like a spell
On the receiver, clearing from his brow
Constraint and timorous mistrusts, that quell
Our easy intercourse and pleasant glow.
But none that ever ate thy bread and salt,
Or shook the dust at thy expanded door,
Can cease to recollect thee, and exalt
The unbounded fervour, giving more and more
Ease to the sitter till he seemed to be
Friend, though a stranger; and, though strange,
yet free.

## II.

The evening light is lowering on the lawn,
The kine are feeding, and the nibbling sheep
Cast shadows on the green,—the trees have drawn
Their outlines bolder, and gay colours steep
The straggling clouds,—a stream of light glides down
The banquet table, tinting flowers whose bells
The bees might ravish;—he, we gladly crown
Our guide and sage, smiles blandly, while he tells
Some recent chronicle of flagrant guile,
Some clear experience, or a deed of blame,
Or jests; and cheers us with a common smile.
'Oh nights and suppers of the gods,'—all gone,
And we, their sad survivors, feel how one,
When lost, can jar life's most melodious tone.

## III.

The stalest theme that can inspire the pen,
The theme we all peruse in every flower,
In every bridal smile, and every hour
Of sunshine, and in worldly pride and gain.
It is the text of seasons, and doth speak
One language both to wise and worthless men :
"Thou must resign"—thy youth, thy health, and seek
All life's requirements and sober means
In duller moments and in colder scenes.
The easy chair, the crutch, the helping hand
Must be thy barter for the elastic limb,
And for the sparkling eye, the beam too dim
For noon to brighten :—yet, this great command ;—
"Thou must resign" cuts sharpest when it rends
By sudden stroke, the intercourse of friends.

*Vale, in eternum vale !*

# MAN AND NATURE.

## THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

Time,—thou amidst the workers of the world,
The mighty pilot art;
With rudder ever set, and sail unfurled,
Seeking an unreached mart.

How joyously we swarm thy pleasant deck,
In young, expectant joy;
When the long hair hangs glossy down the neck,
And o'er all glows the boy!

Gaily the bark floats over waves that flash
Like jewels round the prow;
And murmur playful music, as they dash,
And snatch the morning glow.

Beautiful shores lie studding every cove,
And nothing mars the view,
Where'er the boy's inquiring glances rove,
To catch the gay and new.

Soon, where the shores wind round the sunny bay,
The anchor bites the shoal;
And there the youth throws time in feast away,
And heats, with love, the soul.

The young, the beautiful, together meet
In void unrecked delay;
And accent thrills to accent, as their feet
In the green pastures stray.

Look in her eye, how bright its lustre gleams,
What meaning in her glow!
How the delighted spirit warms and teems
With passionate vow on vow!

And wherefore not? No fashion earth can give,
No fascinating lure,
Like that along the heart will breed and live,
And patiently endure.

It may be only desolation, gay
With a deceitful gleam;—
A misery in motley to bewray
The future with a dream:

It may precede a hundred woes and wrongs,
And mock the heart it wiles,
And, mid the pestilence of busy tongues,
Betray while it beguiles:

Let it betray—the worst will for the worst
Find its sole help and cure,
And hope, with her successive fancies nurst,
Will teach them to endure.

But time is hastening. Lo! the sail is set
To waft her burden on;
The triflers on the deck again are met,
To try a different zone.

The winds to pleasant stress confine their powers,
The seas coil crispy round;
Nothing so listless as those listless hours,
Lulled by the drowsy sound

Of easy breeze, that strikes the rigid line,
And dies along the shroud;
Now, like the music of a harp divine,
Now, harsh as murmuring crowd.

"Why dost thou loiter, Pilot, on these seas
Smiling, and bright, and still,
Let us ahead, where bolder skies increase
The use of art and skill."

The pilot eyes his charge,—so young, so fair,—
And meets the swelling gale,
And the gay waters darken, and the air
Whistles through cord and sail.

The lusty boy turns eager to the strife,
And bounds, as if with wings,
And feels the peril lend a zest to life,
And trusts deceitful things.

But soon even bliss grows stale,—he yawns to raise
Wonder in every breast;
His eager pulse no difficulty stays
To struggle for the best.

Each towering headland, scowling at the gale;
Each islet, lurking low,
Warms the enthusiast to press on sail,
And bids him dare and do.

He scorns the rock, that frowns mid creamy surf,
And eagerly would ride
The waves, that bound, like chargers o'er the turf,
In deadly strength and pride.

Danger delights him; and, to mock the strong,
And set the great at nought,
Stirs manhood in him, till his powers throng
Round some ambitious thought.

"On, laggard pilot, crowd thy scanty sail,
And tack thy bark to wind,
On,—let us ride the passion's roughest gale,
So we leave youth behind."

Grimly the pilot smiles, unfurls the sheet,
And the bark darts away,
Where over head black clouds in tempest meet
The waters lashed to spray.

Spars, cordage, carcasses confused are borne
Along that dismal sea,
And all that ride it show an aspect worn,
Less gay, less bright, less free.

The dash of sober earnestness and care
Has eaten line by line,
And turned to iron-grey the glossy hair,
And quenched the power divine.

Yet summer glows around, and islands fair,
Lie glittering in that main,
Where the ripe season breathes delicious air,
O'er fields, weighed down with grain.

And toil-brown men, with heaving bosoms, mow
The fells and grassy plain,
And from the stubble ripened corn-sheaves throw
On the stout reeling wain:

And then they break the bread, and drain the flask
Under the thorny green;
And, nerved anew, resume the sultry task,
Till the dusks intervene.

Strong manhood eyes the scene, and cries, "Away,
Let us seek other shores,
Where burden hath no sorrowful delay
To check the flying hours.

"The sweat-bought peace is not the peace I sought
In youth's exulting spring;
But the unwearied pleasure, boldly caught
While glittering on the wing.

"The earth hath many a shore, where, calm with rest
The moments drift away;
And fulness bids the easy mind be blest,
And laugh from day to day.

"On, on."—A duskier sky looms overhead,
And colder breezes blow,
And the stout vessel strains from helm to head,
And labours to and fro:

Its spread sails wear the rendings of the gale,
And its strong bulwarks show
Where the wave struck, and made their iron frail,
And shook the ribbed walls through.

Dim shores are passed, where fruits in ripened glow
Are mixed with withered flowers,
And red leaves whistle shrill, as the winds blow
Through autumn's wasted bowers.

The weary gleaner picks her winter meal
Amid the stubble's waste,
And the sun's dewy lustre overhead
Grows thin, and overcast.

Still to the pilot turning Man cries, "Speed!
On! let us make the shore,
Where gold, the remedy of toil and need,
Strews plain and valley o'er.

"There, these sad storms outridden, we may rest
And life will give reward;
And, by no sorrowful reverse distrest,
Laugh round a plenteous board.

"No gloomy menace of neglect and want
Shall fret the coming day;
No more the heart shall after glories pant,
That pass in toil away.

"But pleasure, altering from mood to mood,
Shall cheer the fading brow;
And the sere frame shall glow with ardent blood,
And jest at threatening woe.

"Steer on, steer on;"—the pilot nears the shore,
But dusky cliffs surround,
And from the mountains winter's chilling frore,
Cuts, like a smarting wound.

Cold, herdless pastures stretch, and fruitless fields,
Iced o'er, deny reward;
Gold, gold alone the dreary district yields:—
A mocking, stagnant hoard.

No woodland villages, nor sparkling flowers,
Nor birds the cold waste cheer;
But o'er the landscape mist and ague lours,
And deserts stretch out drear.

"Turn, pilot," cries the weary, wasted man,
"Let us return again;
Diseases rack me, and my face grows wan
With weariness and pain.

"Why didst thou bear me from my glowing prime,
When, full of hope and bold,
Each grain that filled the hour-glass of time
Was grain of happy gold.

"Why didst thou guide me on through wreck and gale,
To bear me to a shore
Where want, midst wealth, sits loathsome, haggard, frail,
Counting her wretched ore."

"Nay," cries the pilot, "never more thou'lt see
The gay shore of the boy,
And never shall thy breast again throb free,
And leap with living joy.

"Onward we toil to gloomier, lonelier shores,
Where cold and sightless night,
Shall seize thy superannuated powers,
And end their wretched fight.

"There, broken down with all that life has been,
Thy pride shall waste away,
And thy eye, closing on its harassed scene,
Shall give the clay its clay."

## THE BEGGAR.

Ye high-born gentles, who despise
  My rags, and age, and poverty;
Who turn away discourteous eyes,
  And hurry from my sorrowing sigh:
You see me shudder as I feel
  The pelting cold of winter's rain,
While, wrapped in fur and wool, you reel
  From banquets and the syren's strain.

Oft, when I see you hurrying on,
  With glee resounding as you go,
I ask great nature, with a groan,
  Wherefore your blessing is my woe?
Wherefore she gives the wish to be
  Another being, wherefore bends
One under lifelong misery,
  And one each happy influence sends.

True, I was born to what I am,
  My cradle was a patch of straw,
And I was taught, a babe, to sham,
  And live without regard to law.

In rudest hovel, all alone,
My winter nights have often past,
Without a crust, without a bone
To blunt the sharp December's blast.

Yet have I had my merry days,
For fortune, in the beggar's purse,
Sometimes her generous hand displays,
And oft remits her dreadful curse:
Then, in the coal-fire corner gay,
My rags, my sores, my wants forgot,
No monarch threw the hours away
So glad in his surpassing lot.

The dizzy ale reeled in my brain,
And unaccustomed pleasure flew
From song to song, and broke the chain,
That round me hate and evil drew:
A master, independent then,
The world seemed waiting at my call,
I reeled in bliss, and felt again
That man is man, despite of all.

Yes, bitter misery, thou hast
Some compensations for thy bane,
And who so glad forgets the past
As he, to whom the past is pain?
And the dark future, even to me
Hath prospects, that beguile it on;
I dread not what I cannot see,
And hope, even while I starve and groan.

## EVENING.

Lo! the evening, how it cometh
O'er the golden western stream;
Lo! the night-wind, how it moveth
In the shadow of the beam.
Come on gentleness, persuading
All things to thine own sweet will,
Till our hearts, at thy invading,
Lie, like mastered passions, still.

Lo! the stream, how calm it glideth
Where it lately urged the mill;
Lo! the shadow, how it strideth
Dark and darker down the hill.
Come, like miser to his money,
When his heart is glad with gain;
Come, like wild-bee to its honey,
Loaded from the bean-sweet plain.

Hark! the bell of evening calleth
All that toil, and all that stray;
Like the pulse of sleep it falleth,
Wafted on the gust away.

One by one its notes seem nearer:
Then they die along the vale,
Breathing, to the distant hearer,
Like some far-off nightingale.

Lo! the evening, how it parteth
With one golden streak of light;
Where along the dim lake darteth
One last swimmer, scaly bright.
Lo! the trees, with colder shiver,
Shake their branches o'er the stream:
And the lights, that live for ever,
Sparkle out, with keener gleam.

Fare thee well, soft hour, stealing
Over crowded mart and field;
And with generous bounty sealing
Eyes, anxiety unsealed.
Fare thee well, thou great devotion,
Thine the pillow, thine the stall;
While around thee, night's dark ocean
Rolls its slumber over all.

## MADAME MÈRE.

Lady, I knew thee not, but thou,
So tried by life's vicissitude,
More than my friend, I seem to know
And feel thy kinship, more than blood:
For all that can elate, subdue;
The best, the worst, thy fortune knew.

When, cushioned on thy happy breast,
Thy smiles turned to thy son,
And thy maternal kisses pressed
That conqueror unknown,
Did hope, or fear, a glance reveal
Of all that thou wast doomed to feel?

No, thou didst dream as mothers dream,
And picture his career
Tinged by prosperity's mild gleam,
And lightly touched by care,
Passing away, in ripe old age,
The graven stone his only page.

Or if, perchance, ambition stole,
While watching that young eye,
The highest bias of thy soul
To fact were mockery:
Thou couldst not wish him half so great,
Nor ask such power, except in hate.

Some ermined judge, some Bossuet,
Some hero of the hour,
Some Fleury, growing weak and grey
With weak, degenerate power;—
These were thy loftiest hopes for him,
Whose glory grew the world's sole theme.

And, when event unveiled her face,
And showed the gifts she brought,
And lifted all her hero's race
To power undreamed, unsought,
And thou, made glorious in that light,
Didst shine a planet in men's sight:

When glory shouted as he strode,
And wonder, gazing wild,
Traced him o'er rock and mountain road,
While nations were despoiled,—
Thou, with providing care, wast still
Preparing for the mightier ill.

"These kings may yet want bread"—thy heart,
Foreboding, told thee well,
Fate had but played an actor's part,
Her false mask sudden fell,
And armies, nations, crowns were rent,
And empire changed to banishment.

But suffering never wrung a tear
From thy undaunted eye,
For pride had taught thee how to bear
More even than misery;
And still, as grief on grief was sent,
The heroine raised what sorrow bent.

Yet, yet thy solitary state,
The imperial wreck around,
The gauds, reminding thee how great
The heart they could but wound,
The bitter partings, and the lees
Of man's pretended sympathies:

These must have ate, with bitter fang,
Thy mournful hours away,
And, though thy pride concealed the pang,
Yet wast thou still their prey;
And, year by year, thy lofty mind
Felt more, the less the lip repined.

And when thy thought turned to that rock,
Where torture's bitter art
Lent his own eagle nerve to lock
Its talons in his heart,
Did not thy blood, in secret thrill,
And agony o'ercome the will.

Aye, that unbent thee, but in vain,—
Too long had royal blood
Curdled beneath the sickening chain
Of his commanding mood;
And who has mercy on the sting,
That changes pride to suffering?

And he, and all went, one by one,
Yet thou, surviving, stood
Their shattered Niobe, alone,
The Pyrrha of the flood;
With nothing left, of race or home,
But recollection, and their tomb.

And now thou hast the common lot,
And that eventful time
Is all removed, and half forgot
In fresh desires and crime;
The fresh desires, that lead us on;
The crimes, that win as they have won.

## NIGHT ON THE SEA.

I floated on the deep;—
Darkness was in the sky, and the stars shone;
The winds breathed deeply, like a midnight sleep,
And the pale waters curled, with onward sweep,
To shores, from which all pulse of life seemed gone.

Art thou that world, I cried,
That populous world I left but yesterday,
Where commerce was the bark, faction the tide
That wafted labour, misery, and pride
To age, and weariness, and ultimate clay?

Hath man, the powerful there,
Power and empire on these floating plains,
That live and move with majesty severe,
And beat, with pulse-like throb, the impelling air,
And snap, in passion's rage, the anchor's chains?

Hath he to bondage bent
That head, whose locks are tossing foamy white,
And ploughed the face, that now with heaven is blent,
And in thy bowels mines and caverns rent,
And claimed thee for a heritage—a right?

Hath he enfenced thy plain,
And sown it with his corn, and oil, and wine,
And, with the sweat of vassals, gathered grain;
Making their toil, his rest; their want, his gain;
And drawn the fulness of his breast from thine?

Hath his constructive spell
Fretted with palaces thy amber sand,
And where the sirens and the mermaids dwell,
In halls of pearl, and labyrinths of shell,
Bent the resplendent waters to command?

Thou laughest, solemn sea,
And with a scornful sweep thou seem'st to say
"What is the power that shall fetter me,
Or stay me in my strength, or make less free
The steed I ride on, or the arm I sway?

"Thinkest thou yon feeble thing,
The clay-born ruler of a little clay,
With error and deception buffeting,
Shall o'er my waves his cobweb harness fling,
And turn me in my wrath, and say me nay.

"Though he has strength and skill,
And bears an artful and contriving hand,
And makes his thought a Titan, to fulfil
The projects and ambition of his will,
And shackles elements to his command:

"Yet on my shore he turns
Disheartened and o'erpowered, great no more,
And, while my waves roll smilingly, he learns
That earth contains a mightier power, that spurns
His arts, his proud pretension, and his lore."

Such voice I seemed to hear
Murmured along the surges, which the sky
Painted with grey, weak light,—so grey, so drear,
I turned from the pale glimmer, as it were
From spirit forms, as gleam by gleam shot by.

I turned on either side
To pierce the heavy gloom that covered all,
And search the way I travelled, but the tide
Went onward, with no beacon for its guide,
Except the foam that fringed it like a pall.

And yet, in that thick gloom,
Faint shapes were shadowed, like the shapes of men,—
The old more aged, youth without its bloom,
And clothed in weedy garments, wove in loom
Deep in some briny cave, or sea-dog's den.

Methought they seemed the dead,
Whose plans and enterprise the storms laid low,
When scarce a rag of hope the rent sail spread,
And all prayed loud for mercy, while in dread
They felt death reel beneath them to and fro.

"What askest thou?" then cried
A voice that came from no distinguished form—
"The world thou hast deprived me of," replied
A murmuring sound that faltered, and then sighed—
"Thy fiends raised up around us shoal and storm.

"Our vessel bore the strain
Of breakers, and the indiscriminate rush
Of winds, that drove along with hail and rain,
Till, foe to foe united, rent in twain
The groaning hulks, that sunk with bubbling gush.

"Oh! give me back again
The breath I lost, the true love never chill;
Children are wailing for me, but in vain,
And eyes, stretched anxiously across thy plain,
Seek me with tears, against hope hoping still."

The dusky waters made
A restless movement, and the form passed on;
And then there wandered past a pallid shade,
That heav'd deep groans, and, wrung with misery, pray'd
The mighty sea to give back it alone.

"For five and forty years
I toiled on earth for riches, and, behold,
With sweat, and labour, and unceasing cares,
All that the ailing body racks and wears,
I brought together merchandise and gold.

"And then, when all seemed past—
Labour and care,—and I was free and blest,
Thy breakers rushed on all I had amassed,
And strewed, like ashes on the piercing blast,
The wealth that robbed my youth of love and rest."

The flood, with grinning scorn,
Leered on its way, and seemed to yawn for more,
While troops upon the thin grey starlight borne,
Flitted along, heart-broken and forlorn,
The wrecks of wrecks, which tides and sands devour.

And then again their came
A mournful sound, like some wind-moaning shell,
Crying—"Oh, water! when wilt thou be tame,
And cease to swallow life, leaving no name
Writ on thy waves, where shrieking thousands fell.

"I was a prince of men;
What slaves could do was mine, or earth could bear;
Yet, thou hast laid me in thy briny den,
Without a record from the venal pen,
Without the pauper's portion—hurried prayer.

"Yet, when I had my realm,
Men would have taught me that I ruled the sea,
And could the mighty monster overwhelm,
And in its fury take the mid-storm's helm,
And guide it—like my vassal—masterly."

A freckled streak of grey
Shone in the east, as from my dream I woke;
I gazed, but the lean shades had passed away,
And billows, hasting to the coming day,
Athwart our rudder bold and foamy broke.

Onward, with pressing sail,
As if she lived upon the breathing wind,
Our vessel swept, while star by star grew pale,
And soon the beacon of our home we hail,
Leaving the ruthless and the drear behind.

## MARIA.

When first I knew thee all thy youth
  Was blooming, wild, and bright;
Thy face was a leaf, where truth
  Inscribed her words in light;
Thy mind, where love and feeling met,
  Shone like the dawn's young ray,
When, beautiful, we half regret
  To see it change to day.

But, ere thy fifteenth summer fled,
  We laid thee on thy bier,
And, though our tears were wildly shed,
  We scarcely wished thee here;
Such worth and gentleness seemed made
  For purer realms than earth;
And when we saw thy life-beam fade,
  It seemed less death than birth.

But e'en such consolations made
  Our sorrows spring anew,
And still, as round thy couch arrayed,
  Thy last glance met the view;—

And vain the bustle, vain the show
  Of world-engaging things,—
Within our eyes tears seemed to flow
  As from a thousand springs.

Now years have passed, and we can bear
  More calmly and resigned;
And things as brief, though far less dear,
  Have lulled the sorrowing mind;—
But all the action, passion here,
  In which our days consume,
Can never from the memory tear
  Thy virtue, and thy bloom.

## THE SOLDIER'S TALE.

The last gun had fired, and the battle was won,
When we gathered our straw, and prepared us for rest,
And drew out our canteens; while, hiding the sun,
The cloud snatched the eve from the storm-colored west.

"Cheer, comrade—the foeman has seen us to-day
Tear his columns apart, and uncover his line;
And, though many a heart lies at rest on the clay,
When victory crowns us, what lip can repine?"

"'Tis true," said the Lancer,—who dashed from his eye
A tear, that had moistened his cheek—"and I know
That no bold one among you ere hastened to die—
More resolved than I rushed on the front of the foe.

And beside me rode one, who, through many a day,
Has shared in my toil, and partaken my bread;
By my pallet he watched, when I lingering lay
Struck by fever, that left me just spared from the dead.

In boyhood we sought the same sports, the same school;
The same village nursed us afar in the west;
Through thickets and lanes, while accustomed to stroll,
How we planned the dark future, and made it all blest.

In the midst of the onset, a grim-bearded foe
Made a plunge, which a moment had laid me to rest,
When my comrade's quick lance turned the recreant blow,
But the stark blade glanced off to his own faithful breast.

What recks it that sunk the Huzzar at my feet?
What recks it how wildly I leaped from my steed,
And felt the poor heart give its last fluttered beat,
And saw the eye glaze as the life-spirit fled?

We are men—we must feel—and my swimming eye now
Sees no glory that dries up its tear for the dead;
No laurel, which twines the victorious brow,
That can lessen my pang for the hero who bled."

## TURNER'S ITALY.

What light was his, what cunning in the hand,
That thus could consecrate this web with scene,
And o'er few inches of bald space, expand
The glow of heaven, the wave, the life, the green.
Mile after mile displays its lovely change,
And towers and valleys, sinking through the hills,
And the blue distance, through whose hazy range,
The vanishing aërial distils.

Where leads that water, in whose summer breast
The broken arch dips shadows, and the wood,
That, raised in slanting light, and half o'ercast,
Darkens the slope o'er many a leafy rood?
What tower stands lonely, like a brilliant star?
The eve is blushing on its time-worn face,
And the old battlements look out afar,
As if they guarded still that land of grace.

Seek they the foe?—no foe is there, nor war,
Nor aught but happy summer in its glee,
And its sweet handmaidens of earth and air,
The sun, the lazy wave, the breezy tree;

Dying magnificence, that chains the eye
And woos imagination thence, to stray
Far o'er those mountain boundaries, that lie
The hazy future of the pilgrim's way.

What city stretches down that craggy slope,
On whose broad top the column and the wall
Show in what shrine the heathen's lifeless hope
Was built, and how it crumbled to its fall?
Arches on arches mount, where ivy creeps
And binds the tottering sculpture to its place,
And twining round the pagan marble, keeps
The living art of a forgotten race.

How the fair eve enriches yon white shrine,
And gilds the arch of triumph, brighter there
Than when the conqueror, in trophied line,
With spoils and captives, passed in ivory car;
When the applauding populace saw heaped
The riches of an empire, which one blade
Had, as its harvest, without mercy reaped,
And down those streets with cruel pomp displayed.

Now nature, full of happy strength, is there;—
That air, that green, that sunshine, that delight
Of peasant limbs, those ardent sparks, that glare
On the worn battlements and streeted height,
Are nothing but wild beauty raciest,
Nothing but rare perfections, thrown with grace,
Like a becoming robe above the breast
Of the possessor of a heavenly face.

And those cold embers of departed heat,
Those broken fragments of a former age,
Those pavements, worn away with perished feet;
Those towers, that defy no warrior's rage;
Those arches that have borne the brilliant weight
Of armies, yet have sunk beneath the strain
Of dews and mosses, and the constant fret
Of winds, deep laden with autumnal rain:—

What speak they? For, in spiritual tone,
There comes an utterance out of their decay,
Bolder than that which moved men, when the gown
Lifted its folds to check some tyrant's sway;
When all the forum swayed beneath hot words,
And passion, with its ready clamour, bent
Towards the speaker's thought, until the swords
Of popular fury crushed some hard event.

What speak they? Heap up wealth, and entail lands,
And write thy deeds in marble, and proclaim
Thy rank from shore to shore, till thy commands
Are more than Cæsar's were; yet thy great name
Shall be more frail than yon glad peasant's dance,—
Shall crumble sooner than those arches down,—
While nature, with glad health and joyous glance,
Shall give immortal dowry to the clown.

Yet 'tis a moment only that the brush
Has wrested from oblivion,—on, on
Its fellow time has travelled in the crush
Of moments, vanishing as soon as won;

Yet never will that summer eve depart,
  Never will those rich shadows waste to night;
No axe will fell that tree; no after smart
  Will pain those peasants, dancing in the light:

Never shall earthquake roll that rocky height
  On that old city, dying at its foot,
And no invidious cloud shall blot that light,
  Which glows, and gilds, and charms the gazer mute;
But ever beauty, ever full of peace,
  That happy scene shall cheer the jaded eye;
And still suggesting; still, with rich increase,
  Its tale shall warm a long posterity.

## HYMN OF THE LARK.

A lark within the cloud was singing,—
"Can I thank Thee, God of heaven,—
Can the voice that I am winging,—
Tell the bliss Thy love has given?

All Thy givings are unbounded,
Save the voice to count them o'er,
And my uttering throat confounded,
Quivers still to utter more.

Still I struggle to approach Thee
On Thy throne of summer light,
Till my flagging wings reproach me
With the paltry bounds of flight.

Thou hast filled my hours with pleasure;
Secret, in yon bladed field,
Lies my heart's delighted treasure,
Midst the matted weeds concealed.

Near it waves the green corn-flower,
Sparkling daises round it press,
And over it, through the sun and shower,
I try how much my heart can bless.

Sweetly there, in woolly lining,
Treasures of my love are laid;
Pearly gems, with grey spots shining,
Sheltered snug by flower and blade.

Was it weariness that gathered
Spray and dry leaf for that nest,
And the slim construction feathered
With the plumage of my breast?

No, 'twas love, that had no ending,
Day by day I strive to speak
All its passion, coldly blending
What is boundless with the weak.

Pity, pity great Creator,
These poor wings that strive to soar;
Make, O God, these praises greater,
Make the mean and little more.

Take, great heaven, the endeavour
For the love it would express;
And, in strains that ring for ever,
Lift the heart to praise and bless."

## LINES TO THE RAIN CLOUD.

Hail! great provider, that dost now
  Mantle the sultry plain,
And, with thy living overflow,
  Suckle the budding grain.

Whence came that wine of gladness forth
  The thirsty earth to cheer,
And nourish, in its tender birth,
  Each youngling of the year?

Wast thou dispatched from tropic shores,
  Where monsoons urged thee on,
And, wrapt in gloom, the passionate hours
  Held back the pitying sun?

Perchance,—on frozen north winds spread,
  Round isles of winter hung,
Where deserts stretch out, white and dead,—
  The storm thy cradle swung.

There thou didst ride in bitter cold
The melancholy waste,
And o'er the white wolf's icy hold
Shadows and snow-storms cast.

Or wast thou born in tranquil hours,
By sapphire skies confined,
Thy milk—the drench of dewy flowers;
Thy steed—the southern wind?

Or hast thou been some Alp's grey vest,
Where whirling sleet and rack,—
From heights beyond the vulture's nest,
Shut up the dangerous track?

There, shaking gloomily thy brow
Of angry snow and hail,
The herdsman, trembling, saw thee grow
Dark o'er his speckled vale.

Or on a breezy voyage of light
Thou sailst from southern lands;
Striding the death-winds in their flight
O'er salt and herbless sands.

There fainting, weary, cast away,
The Arab's glazing eye
Saw thee, with hope's awakening ray,
Even as he turned to die.

Perchance in warrior beams arrayed
Round the victorious sun,
Thy glittering standards were displayed,
As o'er some battle won.

Or thou didst over ocean chase
The slaver night and day,
The lightning burning on thy face
To scourge his guilty way.

Thou bathest in dew the daisy fields
Around our English home;
While at thy touch, the bee-flower yields
Honey and honey-comb.

The primrose, hid beneath grey leaves,
Like beauty in its tomb,
Feels thy ripe influence, and weaves
Its robe of April bloom.

And, with the snowdrop round her head,
Spring lifts her violet eye,
And hastes, with bud and blossom spread,
To lure thee from the sky.

Nor less for summer's thirsty lip
Thy teeming udder flows,
When through the briar thy pattering drip
Draws incense from the rose;

And through the lines of green young corn,
  Thy coming starts the hare;
When in the listening dewy dawn,
  Thy gay arch spans the air;

And when old Autumn's Bacchant face
  Glows with ripe clusters red,
And beauty lends her last sad grace
  To dying and the dead;—

Thou, with thy constant weeping dews,
  Dost still his blooms befriend,
And midst their mournful smiles, diffuse
  Green beauty to the end.

Oh, welcome comer! but for thee
  Earth were the desert's slave;
And all these scenes, so bold and free,
  One universal grave!

## THE MAGICIAN.

In ages, now the fable's tale,
There lived a man of magic power,
Who could to age its youth recall,
And load with age the stripling's hour;
And ever round his portal clung
His votaries—a motley train,
The young—to be no longer young,
The aged—to be young again.

And still he changed the fretted brow
To glossy locks and rosy health,
And turned the boy's believing glow
To hard distrust and selfish wealth;
And yet incessant round him drew
The same beseeching crowd, who cried--
"I would again my youth renew;"—
"Oh give me age," the youthful sighed:—

"What though my steps were halt and slow,
And pains my portion daily grew,
And rigid lines left on my brow
The seals of strife, that pierced me through.

Still they were battles lost or won,
Their wretched agony was o'er,
All but their painless scars were gone,
Their perished vengeance racked no more.

"But now the beauties thou dost give
Are but for miseries to wound;
The strength renewed is but to strive,
Where strife defeat alone has found.
The love, the boldness that will dare
All nature in its boundless aim
Is passion, laying snare on snare,
To break the heart it cannot tame."

The young, grown old, looked back and sighed—
"Alas, why gave I youth away,
And wished for man's excelling pride,
Lured by his thought and lofty sway:—
Though smaller was my playground's bound
Than stretching acres widely sown,
Yet there the gay heart never found
A bliss it felt ashamed to own.

"What recks this sovereign sway that grows
Too weak to calm its own high blood;
That gathers till its barn o'erflows,
And crops the wide earth, rood by rood.
Fast as its shining riches pour,
They cannot warm the cooling limb,
Or dye the brow's encroaching hoar,
Or couch the eye, grown weak and dim."

Thus the complaining tide flowed on,
Railing alike on every side,
And hating what their wishes won,
No less than what their power denied.
Oh man, vain creature of the hour—
Nay, of the passing moment's span,
Whom all things nourish, all devour,—
Sure change itself is only man.

## THE RECRUIT.

Why weep you, girl, because I change
  My coarse field frock for crimson coat,
And seek, amid the world's great range,
  A bolder than the ploughman's lot;—
True, I have loved you, and the hut
  Where I was born is dear, though mean,
And each familiar haunted spot
  Revives some pleasure that has been.

No matter, I have heard how bright
  And gaily life in camps goes on,
The sergeant showed how many a fight
  Was won by noble Wellington.
He told us how the brave may rise
  And shine 'mid lords, and earls, and stars.
And rouse a nation's bold surprise
  With actions that determine wars.

I scorned the ploughshare when I heard,
  And vowed to try the nobler art;
I pledged my honour,—and the word
  Has never cost a moment's smart:

For thy regard will only rise,
And urge me into danger's way,
That, in some noble enterprise,
Thy love may trace me, day by day.

Perchance I go to other climes,
And traverse half the world to die;
But 'tis the peril that sublimes
The life we stake for victory:
While maimed, my country will not cast
My useless limbs to draw the eye
Of cold compassion, hurrying past
The lip that craves its charity.

I may repent me, and may say,
Ah, now they sow the generous ground,
And now they whet the scythes for hay,
And now the frothy cup goes round,
And now the harvest far and wide,
Is hurrying labour o'er the plain,
And wild huzzas rise, as they stride
The last slow load of tawny grain.

And I may think of evenings past,
When, sauntering down the hazel lane,
My heart, with foolish, forward haste,
Made vows it never can sustain.
But these are nought—they may not be,
Blind fortune may protect and save,
And the consenting world agree
With all the promises it gave.

Methinks we are not all so bold
  As we would wish; for, as I gaze,
My eyes grow tearful, and enfold
  All my familiar haunts in haze.
The school, the church, the lawn, the mill,
  Where'er my younger hours were cast,
Makes a weak woman of my will,
  And draws a softening sigh at last.

## THE LIFE-BOAT.

1.

The ship was sailing gallantly,
  Her canvas all outspread;
The wind was whistling in her shrouds,
  And wailing overhead;
Yet on she flashed along the sea,
  And cut the creamy tide,
And threw it back, in shivered spray,
  Athwart her creaking side.
Three months are gone, since, glad for home,
  She left the southern main,
And wooed the traders to her side,
  And dared the hurricane;—
Three months are gone, but now at last
  Her port is hard at hand,
And, ere the night, they hope to hear
  The mast-head boy shout—Land.
But gloomily the day has past,
  And night draws swiftly on,
The watch is set; and, with a sigh,
  He marks the setting sun—

Setting amid the gathering clouds
That drape the gloomy west,
As if some corpse were lying there,
With cerecloth on its breast.

2

It comes! The storm hath flashed its sign,
Then sullen, growls afar;
It comes! the signal hath been fired—
The heavens are bent on war;
The furious band are up—they rush—
The canvas flies—the ship
Reels in the surge, and feels her keel
Strain in the storm-wave's grip.
A bow-shot leeward lies the shore,—
The watcher from the mast
Saw the grim headland, when the sun
His final blood-beam cast;
And now it lies in mist and foam,
The helmsman knows not where,
But casts about to catch its point
Amid the lightning's glare.

3

With bent eyes straining through the gloom
A woman lingers there,
And clasps a boy, and moves her lips
In low, beseeching prayer.
"My mother! thou art trembling,
And thy glance is fixed and wild!

Oh mother! more than all the storm,
  Thy look alarms thy child.
You told me as the gliding seas
  Rolled white before the wind,
And baffling gales and fogs came on,
  They brought thy home to mind;
You told me how the welcome lip,
  The welcome clasping hand,
The heart-glad smile, the blessing warm
  Would hail us to the land;
You told me how the bounteous feast,
  And friends around would greet
The gold-field rovers to the shore,—
  Their father's hallowed seat."

4

"Hush! hush my boy; though but a span
  Divides us from our home,
Where we in peace may calmly rest,
  And never after roam;
Yet in that span I see the shapes
  Of hideous demons loom;
I see the glaring, eager eyes,
  Shoot lightnings in the gloom;
I hear their voice—it shouts and howls
  In rigging and in shrouds,
And piercing through the tossing night,
  Growls thunder from the clouds:
The mast sways, groaning, and the lines
  Sing out a burial dirge,

And a grave yawns to cover us,
In every crested surge.
Oh God preserve us! only Thou
Canst lay the rabid wind,
And touch the waves with harmlessness,
And guide the weak and blind."

5

Ha! what was that?—the ship has struck—
She grates upon the rock;
She rises now, and now again
She thuds with quivering shock;
The waves rush on her, tearing off
The armour of her sides,
And, spar by spar, her decks upturn—
Her riven keel divides.

6

"But mother, look! look forward! see!
Along the yeasty crown
Of wave by wave, a dusky line
Is boldly bearing down,—
A flash hath opened up the scene—
It floats like sea-fowl on,
And rowers to their broad oars lean,
'Tis there! ah, now 'tis gone!"
"It comes! the life-boat comes to save;
My boy, thou yet shalt see
Thy mother's home, and share her love
Beneath the chesnut tree."

## KNOWLEDGE.

Back to your dismal shelves, ye craven slaves
Of human thought,
Hurrying these fragile frames to early graves,
And yielding nought;
Enticing with bland arts fresh votaries on,
From theme to theme,
And giving nothing, when the task is done,
But dream for dream.

Five thousand years the inquiring world hath run,
Boasting with pride
Of ignorance destroyed, and knowledge won,
And art spread wide;—
Crying, Behold the wealth that I have given
To craft and skill!
Yet the old mysteries of earth and heaven
Are mysteries still.

Still do we see the future, as a shore
Covered with shade;
And even the past is clouded with the lore
That it displayed.

We stand as doubtful and as erring now
As Adam stood
When the new world burst on him, and its glow
Was fresh from God.

Yet, day by day, discovery to her heap
Adds something new,
And on our sluggish senses seem to creep
Towards the true;
Invention plies her skill, and turns the wheel
Of every art;
Till nature seems about to break her seal,
And all impart.

Yet little do we gain but selfish ease,
And personal pride;
A softer couch, the wealth that distant seas
In islands hide;
A steed that scours the land with broader chest,
And longer rein;
Cords that bind down the lightning, and invest
Earth in their chain.

The Forum and the Senate stake belief
In opposite creed;
Here truth is but the interests of some chief,
And there, 'tis greed;
Sometimes it works its bold, unlimited course,
With earnest grace,
And then it seeks, through dirty paths, to force
The way to place.

Betrayed by wire-drawn thoughts, the little grows
Vast in our sight,
And, victims of the false our rules impose,
We call gloom, light:
We grope mid snares and gins, and think we win
The never won:
And then we turn us, and again begin
The task begun.

Cold disappointment looks, with vacant leer,
On half we do;
And what we call success is oft a snare
We live to rue;
Vainly we strive to estimate the worth
Of what seems best;
For oft the mean and feeble things of earth
Are most carest.

We grow delighted with our vain belief,
And swell with pride,
And strut o'er notions, destined to deceive
The steps they guide;
Yet even deception, while it cheats our powers
With vain debate,
Is all the guide that ever may be ours
In this vague state.

But ways as blind, and objects separate
From what they grew,
Have disciplined lawless force, and made the state
Compact and true;

Struggles of serf and lord, and lord and crown,
Have built control;
And violent passions, out of rage, have grown
Excellent rule.

Then let us trust the vague, and blind, and ill,
That gird us round,
Persuaded that their energies fulfil
Some end profound;
That where we see but error, there may be
A germ of good
Hidden, like fruit in winter's leafless tree,
Bud within bud.

## MARCH.

'Tis March, the month of cold and wind,
And warm deceitful days;
When all the heavens arch beautiful
Through glowing azure haze.

'Tis March, the sullen, bleak, and dull,
Draggled with fog and rain;
Or, full of fury, scouring earth,
And foaming o'er the main.

The passionate youth, the pensive boy,
It turns from rage to glee,
And, while it smiles, quick temper breaks
Out of serenity.

But we forgive these angry hours
Their riot and their fight,
When, on our garden beds and bowers,
The pale bud comes to sight.

The violet heeds not hail and snow;
  But, under hedge and heath,
Glints, even hastening to endow
  The coarse gale with its breath:

And the mild primrose, which the wood
  Loves to protect, throws forth
Her saffron leaflet mid the rude
  Disorders of the north.

And what so beautiful as youth—
  As youth with pride suppressed?
And what so shines as modest truth,
  Where knowledge fills the breast?

And what so beautiful as March,
  When March lays by his hail;
And, in the broad, o'ercapping arch,
  Locks up the north-sea gale!

Who would not rove his lusty woods,
  And trace his babbling brooks;
When, with the scent of velvet buds,
  He fills the Dryad nooks?

Forth—though we cannot yet discard
  The hearth, where winter long,
We chatted through the frost, and heard
  The savage blast give tongue.

But we can vary it with skies,
That lead us once again
To woods of twittering melodies,
And fields of broad green grain;

Where all the life and gifts to come
Smile like a cradled boy;
And, as from that sweet face of bloom
We gather nought but joy;—

So from the promises of spring
We sift mischance and blight,
And hail the bud, and hail the wing,
And hail the dewy light.

## LINES

## TO A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY.

Lady, I praise thee not to call thee fair,
Or count the blushes that display thy brow,
Or tell how many graces bind thy hair,
And give thy neck the glance of Alpine snow;—
I praise thee not, for all is dangerous here
That soars above the gathered crowd around,
And that which makes thee beautiful and dear,
Is but the lure to catch, the mark to wound.

The rose is hung in thorn, the pearl is hid
In plated shell; and thou, more rare than they,
Shouldst, with a proud resolve, each glance forbid,
That smiles to win, and wins but to betray.
For not in arms, with standard o'er his head,
Comes on the foe, to lead thee to disgrace;
Nor, stealing, like the midnight burglar, led
To draw the jewel from its hiding place:

But, to thy humor bending, he shall seem
The keystone of thy hopes, the bond of all;
And while thy eyes, with burning language, gleam,
And love's warm lights around thy roses fall,

And time flies on with necromatic wings,
  And all o'erflows with health and restless joy,
And the heart closer to its fondness clings,
  The studied purpose cheats thee to destroy.

Behind the spoiler laughs, and masks his brow,
  On which his bitter errand is portrayed,
Heaving his sides, to see the blushes grow
  In the heart's earliest innocence arrayed;
And as each dimple marks, with brighter line,
  Some feature, which thy hope elated wears,
The tyrant cries exulting,—It is mine!
  There shall roll down the torrent of my tears:

That blood is mine, whose crimson gathers now
  Like the young morning on the eastern sky;
I'll wreathe the hemlock round that lily brow,
  And heave that laughing breast with sigh on sigh;
And all those eager limbs, that briskly play,
  Shall need the crutch to bear them from the ground;
Till, bending near and nearer to the clay,
  They sink at once, as by a sudden wound.

Beautiful vision! would thou couldst evade
  These silent footsteps of grey-haired decay,
And, ever laughing in the orange shade,
  Trample the worm, that hastens to its prey;
But 'tis in vain, in vain!—though thou dost cool
  Thy blood, with air in polar frosts refined,
And shuttest winter out with bales of wool,
  And raisest stone and oak against the wind:

Though thou dost wash thee in the drench of flowers.
And dost anoint with consecrated oil,
The tyrant, leading the obedient hours,
Mows down the ranks of life, and gleans their spoil.
And nothing from this scene can we remove,
Nothing of worth or pleasure, but that trust,
Which, still surpassing beauty, friendship, love,
Blooms, holy with salvation, from our dust.

## SCENE NEAR NOTTINGHAM.

Halt and look round;—a pastoral scene
  Stretches beneath this hill,
Where man and nature, hand in hand,
  Have blent their separate skill.
Nor vainly this far-spreading page
  Of nature rolls away,
And turns from the distinct and near
  To distance—misty grey.

What is it?—river, meadow, hill;
  A town that slopes the height,
The busy farm, the breezy mill,
  And woods, that spot the light.
What are they?—all that daily meet,
  On every side, the eye,
Yet here, united, exercise,
  What, separate, they deny.

And yet we know not wherefore, bound
  As by some subtle power,
The eye flows with that zony stream
  Beneath the rock-built tower;

Nor why that sail, so far away,
Sends its reflected light
Along the heart, and lifts the sense
To many a dreamy flight.

The town—stretched widely down the steep,
With mansions, shafts, and towers
Fretting its broad-built slaty sweep,
Midst meads and cottage flowers—
Girds in its clay ten thousand men,
Eager for life and gain,
Its streets are thronged, its factories hum,
Its sellers' chafe and strain.

Enter its portal;—every way
Is filled with ardent life,
And passions eagerly contend
In never ending strife;
Want ever urges some for bread,
Some office crave, some power,
And life, in constant battle whelmed,
Knows no reposing hour.

Yet, when this inner tide is spent
In vapory space away,
That haunted, restless hive displays
Only a shell of clay.
On rolls its faction, and its tongues
In busy bargains heat,
And luxury, and ragged want,
Jostle in every street.

Yet, from this spot, how beautiful
Those towers and columns show,
Like banners o'er the troubled bands,
That press and toil below!
And how the culture, scattered round,
Reeling with plenteous store,
Seems like a table, spread by heaven,
At every cottage door!

Delusion;—yet no matter—life
Filled deep with the untrue,
Gives to each understanding heart
Its own peculiar view;
Though rankest passions rage and sweep
Round beauty's bosom love,
Where'er it bears a dove-like mien,
It is to us the dove.

Why should we seek to pry and search
Corruption in its den,
Or strive to wake his hate who finds
An Eden in a fen?
Aye, that is bliss, and bliss alone
While youth's sweet errors still
Urge the unconscious mind with hopes,
Life never can fulfil.

## LINES TO A RIVER.

Great artery of nations, bearing on,
Through wild impediments, thy restless flood;—
Now—like a courser in a race nigh won,
Now—like a mourner to her grief subdued.

Thy life was cradled in the granite rock,
Where frost, unchecked by summer, ruleth lord;
Where sits the vulture, cowering from the shock
Of blasts, that rake those summits like a sword.

Afar, on pastured cliffs, the chalet stood,
Whence piped the distant herdsman's mountain song,
Or eagle-screamings, o'er their meal of blood,
Came back, re-screamed by echo's babbling tongue.

But if such dreary scenes first marked thy way,
When, from those icy caves, thy streamlet burst,
It soon glanced darkly in the snowy ray,
A wavelet, grateful to the chamois' thirst.

And then thy quiet murmur, whimpering low
To the pale moonbeam, as it lay at rest
Folding thee sweetly, like our will, upgrew
The voice of strength and passion in thy breast.

Then down the craggy steep, blindly and strong,
Raging, as if to goad the solid stone,
Thy waters leapt, like fiery youth along,
While rainbow beauty girt thee with its zone.

But soon, on quiet plains, thy tender kiss
Made meadows smile with many a bashful bloom,
And green-leaved branches glow as if with bliss,
And vegetation ply her flowery loom:

Beside thee many a lonely village grew,
And cattle sought thee far to drink and lave,
And overarching, the enduring blue,
Lay, like another heaven, beneath thy wave.

But lovely scenes, and flowers, and quiet plains
Delay thee not;—on, like our restless mind,
Thy waters sped to unexplored domains,
Leaving the rich and beautiful behind.

Even when delighted, we seek new delight,
Our gain to-day prompts but to-morrow's quest,
The riches we possess are only might
Still to press forward to the unpossessed.

On to the busy mart, the loaded quay,
The smoke, the bustle, and the hissing train;
The pressing crowd, where barter's petty fee,
Makes life a gambler's stake of loss and gain.

Yet even there thou restest not, although
The treasures of the world are on thy breast,
And men with coronets engird thy brow,
Richer than ever emperor possessed:—

The helm, that left its wake in Indian seas,
And steered its charge through storm and rocky swell;
The sail, that caught the power of the breeze,
And curbed it to the service of the keel.

The flag waves o'er thee with a conqueror's sway,
The wheel frets through thee with a foamy swell,
The sailor hails thy night-light far away,
For on thy banks his wife and children dwell.

Yet from the meeting hands, and loving hearts,
From traffic's flattering energy and power;
From all the world's great gain and teeming marts,
Thy current coldly lapses, hour by hour.

Forward it hurries toward mightier floods,
And strength and beauty follow it no more;
Like man, who, gathering weakness with his roods,
Dies from them storeless, though oppressed with store.

## CALIFORNIA.

Spent with the interminable road,
A traveller sought his evening rest,
And spread his rush, and gathered wood,
And hasted on his poor repast:
The vast black forest lay before,
A pathless mass of leaf and shade,
Where fir and pine, like ocean-roar,
A hoarse and shingly murmur made.

And wherefore toil-worn, dusty, spent,
With thorn-rent vest, and aching feet;
With frame to want severely bent,
Hath that man pressed through toil and heat?
Far, far beyond the broad champaign
Where forests over forests rise,
The eye may trace a mountain chain,
Edging, with deeper blue, the skies.

Beyond those mountains lies a land,
Where riches, hoarded year by year,
Have turned the flood through golden sand,
And summoned slave and worshipper.

And thither men are hurrying keen,
With hearts to gravest sorrows sold;
Hurrying from every generous scene,
To glean the rugged desert's gold.

Oh, Sacramento, long unknown
The bison lapped thy unprized flood;
The heron, as the sun went down,
Watching thy finny waters, stood;
Or sat the Indian, on thy shore,
Twisting her shells with links of bone,
And braiding sparkles of thy ore,
To grace the dance, and bridal moon.

Now, tent, and hut, and clamorous men
Break on the quiet of thy wave,
And loudly, down thy golden glen,
Quarrels and competitions rave;
And fever, with insidious fang,
Grasps expectation's sanguine mind,
And disappointment's bitter pang,
Blights those, whom fever leaves behind.

Thither that weary man is led,
Who sits beside the forest stream,
And makes dry rush and leaves his bed,
And wistful marks the setting beam;
And dreams that land, which, now all fire,
Glows brighter than the ore it yields,
Will quiet passionate desire,
With gifts that each affliction shields.

Far hath he trod;—a vine-wreathed cot,
Beside a woodland, was his own;
With broad green acres round the spot,
Where herds were scattered up and down.
And there, o'erflowing harvests shared
Their piles of grain and swelling fruit;
And there the bounteous wine cup cheered,
When all was stored, with dance and lute.

But field, and grain, and homstead grew
Dull to the heart possessed with gold,
And down their living hopes he threw,
To seek the riches deserts hold.
And vainly gentle nature cried—
As on he passed, more worn and weary—
"Here, stay by this clear cooling tide;
Why seek the fabulous and dreary?

"Here lies the lake, with woody fringe,
And there the meadow's flowery sward,
By yonder mountain's scarlet tinge,
Lies plenty, waiting for her lord.
Lo, here thy plough shall yield thee gold,
And here thy herds will multiply,
Here mayst thou gather fold on fold,
And, like a prosperous monarch, die!"

"Ah no,—the swift-enriching ore
Shall please me more than meadowy green,
I care not for the herdsman's store,
I care not for the woodland scene;—

The profits of extorted toil,
  Are famine to the golden gain,
Where Sacramento throws her spoil
  Of uncoined riches o'er the plain.

"Oh, give me Sacramento's sand,
  And all the best of earth is mine;
Her shadiest wood, her broadest land,
  Her slaves, her arts, her oil, her wine.
Then will I spurn the cold ideal,
  And scatter fancy's doubtful brood,
And make the wildest hope, the real,
  And prove by certainty the good."

"Nay, turn,—behold yon city grey,
  Mid purple shades of wood and vale,
Where marble towers catch the ray,
  That flings its glance from wharf and sail;—
There busy trade—the fire, the loom
  Win fortune as a lovely bride,
And consecrate her happy bloom
  To health, that gambols at her side."

"I seek no crowded city street,
  Where competition's discords strive;
And rival hearts, that in hatred meet,
  Anxious to live, and not let live;—

Callest thou that health—that shop-worn brain,
Where, year by year, deception tries
Her miserable spells, to gain
The cent per cent of heartless lies?"

"Then ask thy fortune from the sea,
Though strong and passionate, it gives
To whom it gives, full bounteously,
And with its generous plenty heaves."
"Nay, tempt I not the dangerous deep,
Or trust the canvas for an hour;
Where wreck and death, in seeming sleep,
Entice their prey, and then devour."

Then see thy conquest,—yonder flows
Dark Sacramento through its rocks;
But on its marge no herbage grows,
Its waters slake no milky flocks;—
Hard deserts gird it, and the sighs
Of wretched men, who loathe their gold,
Are blent with famine, that denies
Bread, for those treasuries untold.

Men,—are they men, that wither there,
With scowling brow, and desperate eye,
Whose hearts no home-bred comforts share,
But swell with force and enmity?

No yoke of law,—no bond of right,
Cements the feeble to the strong;
But towering, overruling might,
Tramples the weak, and sways by wrong.

Go, dig thy riches, and become
The oppressor, or the slave oppressed:
And learn, in many a comrade's doom,
That fortune's gifts are seldom blessed;
Save when, by slow laborious flow,
They swell the breast from year to year,
And, ripening with thy age, bestow
Ease to a useful, good career.

## THE SUMMER SHOWER.

Let us away this afternoon,
Bright with the lusty sun of June!
Let us away from hive and den,
And seek the shadow of some glen,
And cool with leaves the steamy glow,
That breaks as from a furnace now,
Draining the blossom of its dew,
And toning down the vapory view—
The view, that, with expansive arms
Stretches o'er parks, and vales, and farms;
And, pushing onward, dies away
In the milky blue, and shady grey.

In curving line, the tawny road
Traces the upland, and below,
Strung on the shimmering river's glow,
The emerald valley widens broad,
With cattle scattered, where a lord
Hath reared his mansion, to o'erlook
Miles of green vale, and woods of oak;

And slopes that fade in watery blue,
With hamlets glancing dimly through
The green enclosure. There the crown
Of forest masses, boldly thrown
From side to side, darkens the space
With lines, that blackly interlace
The green, the saffron, and the bright,
Now gleaming in the passing light.

But onward yonder cloud hath grown
Darker and darker, till its frown
Scowls through the openings of the wood,
And throws its rainy haze abroad.
The pattering shower comes briskly on;
With fleeting speed the shining sun
Traces the vale; and, one by one,
Gathers his beams from wood and field,
And village spire; and glances back
A moment on the rural track,
In cloud and slanting rain, concealed.

Let us beneath yon blossomed May,
And watch the shower whirl away
O'er farm and paddock. Hark! it rings,
And the leaf trembles as it flings
Its arrows forth;—the blossoms sip
Its overflow with greedy lip;
And daisies, with their cyclops eye,
Stare at the persecuting sky,
Yet shrink not. What a bowl of gold
The buttercup has chased, to hold

The sweet distilling, which the bee,
Nestled in dry retired nook,
Under the leeward of the tree,
Shall gather, and in sweet cells lock,
When the returning sun-beams speed
Its russet wing, o'er holm and mead.

What king, in stately hall, who hears
The flattering compliments of peers;
Who sees stiff ceremony stand
In gaudy lace, with office wand;
Who at the banquet dines from gold,
And drinks what jewelled beakers hold;—
What king—where'er his beverage grew—
Ere drank like they who drink the dew,
Fragrant with violet or rose,
Or golden, with the gold that glows
On the wet petal, trickling now
With brighter tears, than those that flow
O'er beauty, when her breast is torn
With some cold idol's heartless scorn?

Now hastier on the shower comes,
The distance momently assumes
A steamier grey; the nearest tree
Heaves like a hulk on winter sea;
And every bloom, and every spray,
Drips the abundant waste away,
Yet gives out lustier perfume,
And works its never ceasing loom,

With brighter tints of drapery,
And stores fresh honey for the bee
In every tiny cell, and strains
New sap through all its wandering veins.

But see, the cloud hath had its will,
And looms, a blot on yonder hill;
Its dark robe sweeps the vale; the reek
Hangs on its skirt, and sweeps away
In undistinguishable grey.
The objects that, in vivid chain
Engird the distance, start again
Into the beam, that glows more warm,
And glitters brighter from the storm—
The hall, that through black foliage heaves;
The hamlet tower; the farm-stacked sheaves;
The archway, lifting o'er the mead
The iron road; the steamy speed
Of panting traffic; and the trace
Left by the plough from ridge to base.

The lark shoots up again,—remote
The wood speaks out the cuckoo's note,
The thrush, mid apple blossoms, shakes
Its passionate song, and proudly wakes
The nightingale, whose exquisite lute
Makes other sweetness harsh and tame,
Changing for ever to such suit,
As puts the syren throat to shame.
Let us away! and, in yon grove,
Listen their notes of praise and love.

## THE EMIGRANT.

The sea is smooth; the air serene
  Is stained with evening's softest ray;—
The ray that mingles blue and green,
  And melts in dewy haze away:
And there the headland boldly stands,
  And there the village spire, and there
The down in grassy slope expands,
  Spotted with cattle, far and near.

The night comes creeping duskier on,
  And, with the morrow, all in vain
The eye will seek that rural zone
  Of spire, and cliff, and pastured plain.
Yet there have grown all life's young joy,
  The love that made them like a heaven,
The dreams and passions of the boy,
  Hopes in the world's denials riven.

But life grew sadder;—year by year
The land oppressed, cried—wherefore stay,
Where rent and tax; the scant, the dear,
Make poverty their general prey;
There is a land, where yet no plough
Hath laid its fruitful riches bare;
Nor grinding law, with sallow brow,
Stands counting every ripening ear.

Go seek it!—though no village spire
Rise o'er old oaks, nor wild-flower lane
Wind, fragrant with the haw and briar,
Nor trim field undulate with grain;
Yet thou shalt feel new life inspire
Thy hand to labour, and shalt know
Bold liberty in all the fire
That drives its passions to and fro.

Thy kine and sheep shall graze the hills,
And thou shalt, with thy axes, clear
Broad corn lands, till thy granary fills,
And winter glows with England's cheer;
And Christmas—not with Europe's blast,
With heaped up fires and icy sleet,—
Shall claim thy sunniest hours, and cast
Ripe fruit and garlands at thy feet.

Yet England's memory oft shall rise,
  Oft shall hope's young aspiring dreams
Remind thee, in thy moistening eyes,
  How life deceives the good it seems;
And thou shalt wish some distant hand
  Could grasp thy friendly hand again,
And thou couldst see thy fatherland
  Stretch o'er the populated plain.

But be content,—we cannot live
  The enchanted life we wish and ask;
But still to struggle and to strive
  Is man's invariable task:
No matter what his birth—no weal
  Is everlasting weal below—
The greater like the less must feel,
  Mid affluence, his especial woe!

## HER NAME.

Ask not her name, for what to thee
Would that dear word inspire?
Those accents, that are more to me
Than to the priests their fire.

Thou wouldst not feel its whisper low,
Like music, through thee start;
Mantling thy face with happy glow,
And kindling in thy heart.

To thee it would not tell of eyes
Soft with indwelling light;
A heart, without the heart's disguise,
And beauty in its might.

Thou wouldst not feel the flooded tide
Of hope, distinction, fame,
All wildly through the spirit glide,
To decorate her name.

Then ask me not to breathe the word,
That in my bosom glows,
Like water, which no blast hath stirred,
Or unsoiled mountain snows.

There will I keep it, like the gold
The miser counts alone;
And shrinks, lest other eyes behold
The heap he doats upon.

There will I keep it, not beset
With pearl or precious stone;
But trust, that never can forget
Its beautiful—its own.

And, like some sacred peaceful love
To holiest vigils given,
Her name shall only float above—
Wafted with prayer to heaven.

## THE ITALIAN ORGAN PLAYER.

Thou art a Roman, and perchance the line,
Whence thou hast sprung,
Hath borne the world the heroes, now divine
In Attic song.
Maybe the riot of the Marian throng,
Thy fathers braved,
And stemmed the forum, while the rabble tongue,
With faction raved.

And here,—where sad with beggar's sorrows, thou
Even bread dost crave,—
Howard or Cavendish has led the plough,
Thy trembling slave;—
And these rich islanders, so proud and strong,
By thee o'erborne,
Filled up thy triumph, bound with chain and thong,
Thy bitter scorn.

But fortune, the reverser, hath displaced
Her lord and slave,
And from thy loaded scutcheon, hath erased
All that she gave;—
The serf hath reached the crown, and sitteth now
In curule chair,
While vagrant, the poor Consul wanders through
Suburb and fair.

Yes, the great conqueror, through alley, street,
Leads, in a chain,
The tawdry monkey, dancing at his feet,
To tambourine:
A stinted crust, and miserable straw,
Are all that fate
Hath left to him who gave the world its law,
And its debate.

"Give me a coin for thy posterity!"
He seems to say,
"For the insulting future shall from thee
Wrest all away;
High name, rich revenue, the pride of pride,
And entailed lands
Shall moulder from their parchments, and shall glide
To vassal hands.

"Begging in some far future, thy poor son
Shall know thee not;
But draw his scanty substance from the tone
Of harp or lute;
And, clothed in rags, thrust rudely from the spot,—
Thy heritage now,—
His heart shall ache with poverty's hard lot
Till he lie low."

## THE YOUNG RADICAL.

There is no greater truth than this,—
  That man is born with equal right,
God never farmed his happiness,
  Nor made mankind for wrong and spite;
Yet look abroad: there is no place
  That some great tyrant does not sway;
And lock it up with law, and chase,
  With iron scowl, the poor away.

Look at yon oaks: they were a shade
  Ere Hotspur hunted Douglas down;
And Robin Hood may there have swayed,
  When waste was oft the poor man's own.
They gird a thousand acres now,
  Where landscape changes every rood,
And slope and water break anew
  Through boundaries of copse and wood.

O'er their grey heads a castle rears
Its battlements; and proudly still,
Out of its feudal dungeons, glares
A lord on serfs without a will.
There shields, and quarterings, and crest
Are carved, to set their despot forth,
And to unscutcheoned toil suggest
Ideas of overflowing worth.

And he who calls this entail his,
Is some poor weakling, racked and worn—
The sofa's victim,—whose distress
Might move a lusty peasant's scorn.
"Yet I am better, knaves, than ye;—
One ancestor at Flodden bled,
Another held the cruel key,
When Mary to the block was led."

These are his boast;—for these he craves
A county for himself;—for these
He is a peer, and we are knaves,
That labour for his charities.
His carriage splashes grandly by;
His rank on groom and horse is thrust;
His children ape his vanity,
And look on fustian with disgust.

I say the law is all unjust,
That throws such bounties down to one;
And gives the craftsman scarce a crust,
Whose toil goes on from sun to sun.
How am I less than those who rule?
My blood is red with life and health,
And, in the end, the forming tool
Is the great sire of power and wealth!

Nay, we, the workers, are the blood
And sinews of a prosperous State;
'Tis we that make it strong and proud,
Although it gives us want and hate.
Wreck us on some unpeopled strand,
With some disdainer of our sense;
Which would be Crusoe of the land,
And turn event to opulence?

Why work for idlers, who repay
Our sweat with their contempt and guile?
The bees their wiser law display,
When they confine the hive to toil.
Or, if we still consent to bear
The burden of their sumptuous pride,
Let them not every function share,
That gives the State its rule and guide.

The hand that works the ardent steel,
And gives the wheel its plastic art,
Is subjected by minds that feel
Their high and honourable part.
They are not weaklings, nursed to keep
Some unjust privilege secure,
But men, that through invention reap
The harvest never reaped before.

Who struck out power, that made the land
A mine of wealth, a school of skill;
And brought the keels of every strand,
Till ports and marts with buyers fill?
Was it her schoolmen, or her peers;—
Did Oxford's logic trace its cause;—
Or was it whispered in the ears
Of Pitts, and Peels, and Chancellors?

No; Arkwright, Watt, and Stephenson
Did more than ever learning bred;
Whate'er they won, they boldly won
By what they thought, not what they read.
Their lusty minds sought not a rule
From Bacon;—in their untaught zeal
They looked at need; and, in that school,
Invention bore down obstacle.

Then let the worker have his right;—
Let him be free as priest or peer;
The steel will strike with bolder light
Than gold, and all vain jewel gear.
And hands that work the steel, are those
That know the value of the hand;
'Tis they that strike the bravest blows
To guard, or to enrich their land.

## THE GRAVE OF THE MISSIONARY.

He rests not where the solemn yew
Bends o'er the marble tomb,
And death seems deadlier in the hue
Of still and sacred gloom.

He sleeps not where his fathers sleep,
Amid the hamlet's graves;
Where, over every swelling heap,
The purple heather waves.

But, where the sparkling southern isles
Mid pearl and coral lie,
He bore the earth's most earthless toils,
And laid him down to die.

The tropic airs fan balmy round
The palm that shades his rest;
And richest verdure hues the ground
That presses on his breast.

And there the sun, through scented glooms,
Slants his departing beams,
And herons lave their azure plumes
In cool adjacent streams.

No dirge was breathed along the vale,
As passed his death-mat on;
No funeral flowers perfumed the gale,
No wailing dashed its tone.

But conchs, and frantic howls, and yells
Rang through the twilight air;
And robes were rent, and dazzling shells
Were cast upon his bier.

Far had he come;—another sky
His fatherland o'erhung,
Where, to the last, each tender tie
With yearning fondness clung.

And yet he loved his southern home,
He loved its musky breeze,
And mist-pale hills of feathery bloom,
Shaded with forest trees.

He loved the fierce and swarthy men,
Though oft their flashing eyes
Glared in the solitary glen
At heathen revelries.

Stern were those warriors—stern and proud,- -
But pride relaxed to hear
The truths, that from his warm heart glowed,—
Fervent, but unsevere.

At length—one melancholy eve,
In the glittering moon of flowers—
His spirit peacefully took leave
Of life's long-suffering hours.

Yet, through those hours, which stole away
. In acts of love and care,
Dark passion turned from guilty prey,
And hatred learned to bear.

## A DAY ON THE RHINE.

TO R. J.

---

Oh! canst thou forget it, that beautiful day,
When together we took by the blue Rhine our way;
When its mightiest scenes,—the wild mountain that stood
Ribbed with forest and rock, on the brink of the flood;
The castle in ruins, the grape-clustered vine,
All stretched towards heaven, like gifts on a shrine?

Oh! canst thou forget the young peasants that wrung
Even pleasure from toil in the legends they sung;
And the fair, blushing girls, whom, on every height,
We met with their lovers, in whispering delight;
Or passed with clasped hands at some rude way-side shrine,
So devoted, I wished their religion were mine?

Oh! canst thou forget it, the toil we confessed,
As through forests we climbed to the Drachenfel's crest,
Leaving villages, ravines, and vineyards beneath,
While o'er flood-ways and rocks we pressed, panting for breath;
Till we gained the bold point, where one glance had command
O'er the glory and breadth of that beautiful land?

Oh! canst thou forget, too, as evening came on,
And the mountains burned red in the low blazing sun;
How we looked, from poor Roland's old wall-fallen tower,
On her convent, for whom he had won fame and power;
Where daily he watched for a glance of his bride,
And, at sight of her bier, wildly—heartbroken—died?

## CONTENT.

Content is empire; and a wish restrained,
A passion held in slavery, is a mine,
More than Australian gold, in mountains gained,—
More than a thousand serfs to acres chained,
Or wooded lands, where whisper oak and pine.

"'Tis not enough!" the miser cries, and grieves,
And prays reluctant fortune for her aid;
Yet sees his paddock piled with grainy sheaves,
And hears the lowing of a thousand beeves,
And cannot mete his woods' extended shade.

"Yet it is small!" he cries, "yon heir has more,
And stalks o'er broader limits with his hound;
And counts, with glittering eye, green meadows o'er,
While I, with sickening heart, range moss and moor,
And trace denial to her utmost bound."

"Ah!" sighs the merchant, as absorbed he reads—
Where venture chronicles her loss and gain—
"Ten Indian freights are mine; and wools, and seeds
Stored in vast granaries; and mortgage-deeds,
And barks that strive with the barbarian main.

"Yet it is nothing—months are counted o'er
Ere the poor cargoes reach the welcome strand;
And oft the vessel nears the long-sought shore,
While its crew send their death-shriek through the roar
Of billows, cresting the insidious sand.

"The ungorged flame devours what water spares;
What flames and waters leave, the robber spoils;
The men whom most we trust may be our snares,
Whom ruin winds about us unawares,
Leading catastrophe with nods and smiles."

"True!" says the statesman, "it may seem the end
When enemies are silent, and the crowd
Hail me with benedictions, as the friend
Whom bribe nor party prejudice could bend,
And never at the feet of interest bowed.

"Yet in a day, an hour, the wind may veer,
And some new fashion claim the people's lust;
Or some bland demagogue may fill their chair,
And rouse their false applauses, till the air
Rings curses, where they swore eternal trust."

"Why call me happy?" says the lovely maid,
Burning with youthful excellence and grace,
And scattering, where'er she treads, a shade
On other beauty, till the heart is swayed
To all the tones of her harmonious face.

Some wilful youth, whose disenchanted eye
Wanders unfettered by her winsome art,
Drugs all her heart with venom, and her sigh
Has love's sharp hate; and hot, dry misery
Burns, when the glances from her black eyes start.

"This grace," she cries, "is leased by envious hours,
Who lend their gifts as misers lend their gold,
Imparting only what their lust devours,
Drinking our tears as wine, and scattering flowers
Only on graves, whose tenants they have sold."

Thus hopeless, whatsoe'er the bounty be—
Wealth, beauty, power—all alike unblest,
Groan with desire, and spurn reality,
To ask the impossible, and disagree
With all that life bestows for love or rest.

Mean labour, driving the dividing plough,
Whose wealth would scarce suffice two days for bread,
Bares to the future his intrepid brow,
And sees his ruddy prattlers round him grow,
With neither miser's greed, nor merchant's dread.

Here, where the least is given, complaint is least;
The bosom, uninstructed in desire,
Looks to necessity for all its feast,
Covets the health alone that makes it blest,
And, born to humble fortune, aims no higher.

## THE STREET GIRL.

Sad world of melancholy grief,
I ask not what thou art;
Nor why, with scarce a day's relief,
I bear thy bitter part.

Gay homes around me warmly crowd,
Their hearths are glowing bright,
Whence laughter, often ringing loud,
Cuts me with its delight.

For not a gay or easy thought
Lights my distracted brain;
But sorrow into sorrow wrought
Just varies pain with pain.

These tattered clothes, these naked feet,
These scars of wasting care,
This sense of all that's good and great
Weighed down into despair,

Tell me the worthless weed I am,
Where flaunting flowers abide;
A bane, the idle rich condemn,
And push, with hate, aside;—

A wretch, whom all regard with scorn,
And spurn with bitter slight;
Who hath no bread for morrow's morn,
No pallet for to-night.

And yet the world, provided well
With wastefulness, runs o'er;
And shakes from husk, and ear, and shell,
A never garnered store.

And it hath down, and silk, and flax,
Thrown carelessly away;
And honey, in its cell of wax,
The wild birds' easy prey.

And these are sought, and reared to waste,
In heaps, before the eye;
And, though I starve, I may not taste
Their savage luxury.

Oh! ye that grace the arras room,
And, mid your selfish ease,
Ask for new pleasures, taking gloom
Even from your luxuries:—

Strip lace away, let not defence
  Wrap warm your perfumed skin,
Eat beggars' meat, and touch the pence
  That weary fingers win !

Then wouldst thou live that life above
  For which you sometimes pray ;
And chase, with easy, natural love,
  Thy cold hard thoughts away.

Then wouldst thou know how hard the art
  To live, where every day
Hath some concealed and bitter smart
  To drive repose away ;

Then wouldst thou know how cold and hard,
  Mid the gay city's strife,
To be prevented and debarred
  From every thing, but life :

Life that survives on scraps and doles,
  That fall from rich men's feasts,
The drain of overrunning bowls,
  The bread their table wastes :

Then wouldst thou know how oft a glance,
  That pity casts, may soothe
Long hours of want and vigilance,
  And melancholy ruth.

But 'tis in vain to think, when thought
  Eats its own peace away
When love is gone, and hope hath nought
  To sweeten life's decay.

I call on death,—and yet I shrink
  Before his hollow eyes,
And, just on the releasing brink.
  Turn back to miseries.

And then I pray that all unseen
  The undreaded blow may come,
And the dark veil, of what hath been,
  Rise on a kinder home.

# SONNETS.

## MYSTERY OF THE MIND.

What art thou, spirit, that, from our own will,
Forgest the weapons of our chief distress;
Turning our thoughts to scourge, and making still
Our own desires and eagerness oppress?
Our wishes are thy arms, and thou dost lay
Siege to our peace, with engines framed and bent
Out of our inclination; and we play,
As with a toy, with terrible event:
The voice, that in the ear is harmony,
Jars on reality's discordant strings;
And the fair dancers, that go laughing by,
Are hags, that ride the night with leathern wings.
The good, the pure, the holy stand apart,
Grieving to see the havoc of the heart.

## OUR IGNORANCE.

We straight erect us schools, and one stands forth
  Doling grave consequences, rule by rule;
And yet the circuit of this rounded earth
  Is all one vast and venerable school;
The wisest knows but little, and is still
  A stripling, blundering on the lowest form.
What are his proud degrees, and self-proud skill,
  But the inflation of a creeping worm?
He cannot breathe the air, or scent the rose,
  Or cast his eye upon an earthly mound,
Or shudder in the ice-wind as it blows,
  Or list a tiny river's silvery sound,
But something checks his vanity, and shows
How little of each little thing he knows!

## PRESUMPTION.

When I compare this little base, where high
We raise our structures, and so arrogate
One o'er the other, till our hearts ooze hate,
As from a fountain, that is never dry:
When I compare this little rolling sphere
With the vast firmament that girds it round;
And look upon the minnikins, that here
Quarrel, and live to be each other's wound;
I shrink astonished at the little art,
That high philosophy, or learned pride,
Hath given man to qualify his heart,
And his adjusted reason wisely guide;
Who, overacting every little trust,
Crumbles, in bold presumption, back to dust.

## AGE.

Back, back ! thou palsied and destroying power
That creep'st insidious on us, day by day ;
And. even in our most abandoned hour,
Makest our laughter and delights thy prey.
Oh ! miserable phantom, lame and grey,
And mumbling words like infancy, without
Its plump young smiles, and warm affectionate play ;
Ever believing where thou art in doubt.
And must we yield to thee?—must these gay arts,
Rapid and blithe, with neither grief nor groan,
Grow stale and lifeless in our cooling hearts,
And make no way where they so well begun ?
Is all life's promise but the clown's dull guile,
Cheating the senses for a little while ?

## LIFE.

'Tis strange to live, and yet 'tis strange to die;
To be, yet not to be:—to know that mould
Shall batten on these membranes, which infold,
With tenderest care, the mind's divinity,
To live, all spiritual, in decay;
To range beyond the stars, though crippled here
To the few acres, out of which we rear
The pittance of existence, day by day;
To look upon the past, which lived while we
Were but the mould on which its strife was wrought,
The dull, unconscious matter of its thought,
Now graven in the brass of memory:
We feel we are eternal, yet we droop,
And while we hope, we tremble at our hope.

## LOVE OF LIFE.

'Tis strange that life;—a meal time, and a sleep,
The agitation of disputed claims,
The troubles, over which we groan and weep,
The disappointments of confuted aims,—
Should still retain the fascinating charm
It bore, when all was youth and ideal bliss,
When the sane body asked no healing balm,
And playthings were enough for happiness.
Still racked with pain, with dim and groping eye,
With penury, and lameness, and decay
Of all the appetites, that gave the ray
Of youth its splendor and variety;—
With loss of all—we still incessant cry
For life; and, grasping at its sorrows, die.

## MYSTERY OF LIFE.

When first the eye looks up and sees the sun;
  When first the ear takes in the gathering sound
Of life's incessant wheel, and hears the tone
  Of nature in the living airs around;—
We gaze, and list astonished, and we ask
  Whence we have come, and why we have not been
When we were not, and set us to the task
  Of tracing out this grand mysterious scene.
Yet vain and vague; we make what we believe,
  And trust the little light that gleams around,
As if its paltry glimmer could relieve
  The dungeon, where we grope in mist profound.
We see a few wild movements, and then night
Shuts all the panorama from our sight.

## THE SOUL.

What art thou, spirit, that pervades my frame;
Now glowing bright with pleasure, now depressed;
Brimming my sense with hope, or pouring blame,
As from a fountain, in my trembling breast?
Most beautiful, most variable guest!
Canst thou not smile for ever, and prolong,
Through every season, thy enchanting song,
And make me ever happy, ever blest?
Or hast thou thy command to agitate
The obedient mind, as well as to enchant,
And wring our moments with the wounds of fate,
And turn to pain the ecstacies you grant.
Mysterious spirit! that, still part of me,
Seems something bolder, greater, and more free.

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